

**ABSTRACT**

System and method for managing leases in a distributed file system. A meta-  
data server is employed to manage leases to the objects in the distributed file system,  
5 and a plurality of storage servers provide data storage for the objects. The meta-data  
server grants leases for objects to the clients. With each lease granted, the meta-data  
server provides data that indicate the time at which the lease will expire for the  
associated object. The lease expiration time is included in a subsequent request to the  
storage server for access to the object. The storage server determines whether the lease  
10 has expired. If the lease has expired, the requested access is denied. Otherwise, the  
storage server provides the requested access.